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Memorandum for: A copy of this memo was
sent to the External Dist.
List attached.

Attached is a memo that I thought you might
find interesting on Prime Minister Gonzalez's
handling of Spanish membership in NATO. The author
concludes that pressure from Allied capitals could
be an important factor for Gonzalez in keeping open
the option of future military integration into the
Alliance.

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**Office of European Analysis
Directorate of Intelligence**

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Central Intelligence Agency



Washington, D.C. 20505

DIRECTORATE OF INTELLIGENCE

21 June 1984

SPAIN: Gonzalez Moves Closer to a Policy on NATO

Summary

[redacted] Communists, peace groups, and important elements in Gonzalez's Socialist Party have increased their opposition to NATO. In the face of these conflicting pressures Gonzalez has inched further toward public endorsement of continued Spanish membership in the Alliance, but also has said that he will stop short of full military integration. Gonzalez probably can keep the option of future integration open, and continued prompting from other Western leaders could be an important factor in moving him in that direction. [redacted]

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Pressure to Move Forward on NATO

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This memorandum was written by [redacted] Iberian-Aegean Branch, Western Europe Division, Office of European Analysis, with a contribution from [redacted] Security Issues Branch, European Issues Division, Office of European Analysis. Comments may be addressed to the Chief, Western Europe Division [redacted]

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The Spanish military has also spoken out increasingly in favor of NATO. Since joining the Alliance the armed services have become better informed of the Soviet military threat and of NATO's potential contribution to Spain's defense. Three weeks ago, in fact, General Peralba, the Air Force Chief of Staff, publicly declared that full integration into NATO would be "very beneficial" for the armed forces. The Socialists value good relations with the military and listen seriously to Spain's top commanders. [redacted]

Opposition to the Alliance

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Gonzalez opposed the previous center-right government's decision to enter NATO, pledged in his election campaign in 1982 to hold a referendum on Spanish membership, and froze military integration at a largely representational level. Although he has gradually adopted a more positive public stance since then, published polls [redacted] show that most voters still have reservations about the Alliance. [redacted]

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The Communists have tried to capitalize on public misgivings and have joined with a variety of peace groups in the past several weeks in sponsoring large anti-NATO demonstrations. Gonzalez has probably been even more troubled by the open opposition to NATO of Socialist trade unions and youth groups as well as in the party's strong regional organization in Catalonia. [redacted]

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Searching for Options

Gonzalez has publicly reaffirmed his commitment in principle to Western defense efforts. [redacted]

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[redacted] signalled to the press [redacted] On the other hand, he has [redacted] that he will not completely lift the freeze on full integration. [redacted]

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*Spain formally joined NATO in May 1982. By the time Gonzalez took office and froze further integration in December, Spain was actively participating on the political side of the Alliance, primarily through the North Atlantic Council and the Political Advisors and Economic Advisors meetings. On the military side Spanish participation was substantially less and was limited largely to representation on the Military Committee, the Defense Planning Committee, the Nuclear Policy Group, and a few technical committees and working groups. Spanish forces were not integrated into NATO's military command structure, nor was Madrid represented on the International Military Staff or at SHAPE. Since December 1982 Madrid has made small, quiet steps toward increasing its participation. For example, Spain has linked up with NATO's communication system, sent officers to NATO courses, and sought a role in Alliance arms projects. Most recently, Spain applied earlier this month to join the Maintenance and Supply Organization. [redacted]

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Gonzalez appears to be concerned primarily with reducing the political costs of support for continuing NATO membership rather than with defining the terms of Spanish participation. The greatest problem Gonzalez faces is his promise to hold a referendum before his term of office ends in October 1986. According to the press, as much as 86 percent of the population wants him to go ahead with that vote. [redacted]

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[redacted] constitutional requirements make early 1985 the likely time for a referendum, and the Socialists have been working painstakingly to draft "winnable" language. Gonzalez himself has recently suggested publicly that he may ask the country to choose in effect between NATO or the even more unpopular bilateral agreement with the United States. [redacted]

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However it is couched, a referendum would focus attention on NATO and could harden opposition to the Alliance. Gonzalez also knows that a referendum could divide his party. The Socialist Party's strong personal allegiance to him means that he will probably be able to wring a formal endorsement for membership from the party congress in December. A referendum campaign, nevertheless, will test that unity and give party dissidents a popular issue. [redacted]

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These dangers have led Gonzalez to consider ways of avoiding the referendum. Last month, [redacted] a prominent party moderate publicly proposed that the NATO issue be decided instead by Parliament. Two weeks ago Gonzalez himself said publicly that he regretted his referendum promise, although he added that he stood by that commitment. [redacted]

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[redacted] Gonzalez's concern over his image as a man who keeps his promises, however, will make it difficult, if not impossible, for him to abandon his referendum pledge. [redacted]

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Reaching a Decision

Gonzalez is sensitive to public moods, and polls will almost certainly continue to show opposition to NATO running across much of the political spectrum. Gonzalez probably also knows, however, that any significant backtracking on membership could trouble many business and banking leaders as well as the military whose confidence he has worked hard to win. [redacted]

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Well coordinated behind-the-scenes pressure from Allied capitals could strengthen Gonzalez's resolve on NATO. Bonn, Paris, Brussels, and Rome could be particularly influential. Gonzalez, though, needs and will want the Allies to help him with the Spanish public by moving forward on Madrid's EC application, which enjoys wide popular backing. [redacted]

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Gonzalez is likely to move carefully in seeking public approval for the Alliance. He will probably attempt to keep Spanish participation at the minimum level acceptable to his NATO Allies, and try to keep as best he can the appearance of an independent role within the Alliance. The key question will be whether the Spanish decision leaves open the possibility of eventual military integration. If Gonzalez believes it necessary to satisfy his NATO Allies on this point, his popularity with the electorate and his generally strong grip on his party should give him the political strength to win out.

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There is a possibility that Gonzalez could balance his support for NATO membership by depreciating Spain's bilateral agreement with Washington. The bilateral agreement is the "sleeper" issue in Spanish foreign policy. Opinion polls show that opposition to the presence of US forces in Spain is widespread and growing. That sentiment was largely latent until recently. A referendum campaign that indirectly pitted the bilateral agreement against NATO membership, however, could bring that opposition to the surface and make renegotiation of the accord more difficult in 1986. Gonzalez's interest in continued good relations with Washington, however, will make him cautious on this issue.

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Over the Longer Term

If Gonzalez manages to surmount the hurdles to winning approval for membership in the Alliance, he will still have to face the issue of military integration. An important consideration that would favor full integration over the longer term is the financial burden of maintaining the separate military structure favored by some Socialists. Full integration could free scarce funds for the military modernization program Gonzalez has already promised as well as for the expanded social expenditures he would almost certainly like if he wins a second term. Another factor that could favor

*Ironically, the same polls show that pro-American sympathies are also growing. The explanation for this apparently contradictory movement of opinion appears to be Gonzalez himself. The Socialist Prime Minister has undercut traditional leftist misgivings toward Washington by his open support for positive US-Spanish ties. At the same time, he has continued to hold in a low key way that a foreign military presence on Spanish soil can be justified only on the grounds that it contributes to the defense of the West. This grudging acceptance of the US use of bases contributed to a decline in public support for the US military presence that began substantially before the well-attended and well-publicized peace demonstrations this spring that focused on the base issue as well as NATO membership.

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integration over the longer term is Gonzalez's interest in building up Spain's arms industry and military exports. Allied officials will be able to point out that full participation would improve Spain's understanding of NATO equipment needs and make it easier to share in Alliance arms consortia.

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